

Filed for intro on 08/07/2001

HOUSE RESOLUTION 183
By Brooks

A RESOLUTION To welcome the Tuskegee Airman, Inc., the Organization of Black Airline Pilots, the Black Pilots of America, the National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees and the United States Army Black Army Officer Associates to Memphis, Tennessee.

WHEREAS, The Tennessee General Assembly was excited and very pleased to learn that the Tuskegee Airman, Inc., the Organization of Black Airline Pilots, the Black Pilots of America, the National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees and the United States Army Black Army Officer Associates will hold their Annual Convention in Memphis, Tennessee from August 11-19, 2001, at the Cook Convention Center and the Marriott Hotel Downtown; and

WHEREAS, After World War II, the Tuskegee Airman, Inc. was formed as a result of several successful reunions of the men and women who had participated in the "Tuskegee Experience" by serving in the Army Air Corps Program at Tuskegee, Alabama or one of the units growing out of that fabled program; and

WHEREAS, In August, 1972, the Airmen gathered in Detroit, Michigan, voted to form a national organization and elected Lt. Colonel (Retired) John J. Suggs as "Commander"; and

HR0183

00948226

WHEREAS, The group administers three funds: The National Scholarship Fund, which annually awards college scholarships to deserving and financially disadvantaged young people who are dedicated to a career in aviation, aeronautics or space; the National Historic Museum Fund, which assists the museum located at historic Fort Wayne in Detroit; and the Aviation Opportunities for Youth Fund, which allows local chapters to provide funding for many exemplary programs including the Young Eagles Program, the Aviation-One Program, the Adopt-A-School Program, the Adopt-A-ROTC Program, Adopt-A-JRROTC Program, the Civil Air Patrol Program, the Explorer Scout Program, the Speakers Bureau Program and the Flight Orientation Program; and

WHEREAS The Organization of Black Airline Pilots (OBAP) has a history steeped in the struggle for fairness, the group was formed in 1976, when Ben Thomas, a young African-American pilot, employed by Eastern Airlines noticed that there were almost no African-American pilots employed by the major United States airlines; and

WHEREAS, Marion Greene was the first African-American to be hired as a pilot by a major airline (Continental) in 1963; and

WHEREAS, Under Mr. Thomas's astute leadership the organization grew as did the number of African-American pilots employed by major airlines, to approximately 80 in 1976, 400 in 1986 and more than 1, 076 today; and.

WHEREAS, The Organization of Black Airline Pilots, Inc. was established as a representative group, and is dedicated to enhancing, advancing and increasing the participation of Blacks and other minorities in the aviation industry; and

WHEREAS, OBAP has placed its greatest emphasis on preparing young persons for life through education and orientating them towards a successful future by highlighting the exciting careers available in aviation; and

WHEREAS, This outstanding group has four main goals: first to enhance, advance and promote educational opportunities in aviation; second, to develop and sustain a process for the

on-going mentoring of our youth; third, to monitor the development of aviation projects and assist in the job placement of qualified pilots; and fourth, to protect the general interests of its members; and

WHEREAS, The Organization of Black Airline Pilots is continuing the noble legacy of early black flight pioneers, including legendary figures, Bessie Coleman, Eugene Jacque Bullard, Janet Bragg, Willa Brown, Chief Anderson, and the Trail Blazing Excellence of the Tuskegee Airmen through four important programs: Aviation Career Education (ACE) Academy Camps, Professional Pilot Development Program (PPDP), the Summer Flight Academy and the Western University's Ab Initio International Flight Training Program; and

WHEREAS, It is fitting that we pause in our deliberations to honor these exemplary groups for the valuable work they have done in service of minority participation in aviation and welcome them to Memphis; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That we honor and commend the Tuskegee Airman, Inc., the Organization of Black Airline Pilots, the Black Pilots of America, the National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees and the United States Army Black Army Officer Associates and welcome them to Memphis and Tennessee for their Annual Convention.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That appropriate copies of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copies.